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THE ESSENTIAL VOCABULARY OF HIGH-SCHOOL LATIN—THE PRINCIPLE OF ITS SELECTION AND THE REFORM OF ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

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Every step in the changes in entrance requirements in Latin since Harvard, in 1886, adopted exclusively sight-translation requirements, has been a step backward in one respect at least: every step has, in one way or another, put us farther away from perfect freedom of choice, and consequently from much-desired uniformity. If the latest form of the present reform movement tends directly or indirectly to intenser or further prescription, in any form, I protest that it is not a step forward.

According to the Harvard requirements of 1886, English was the only language, ancient or modern, in which any portion of text to be read was prescribed—the examinations were all at sight. But uniformity was not attained, for no other college followed suit; the fitting schools proved inadequate to the sudden freedom allowed them, and Harvard “took back water” in a resort to prescription again in 1898. The advent of “The Board” a few years later did not relieve the situation which had to be faced by large schools preparing for many colleges—a situation now complicated by useless multiplication of varieties of prescription—“a situation which I will not miscall, which I dare not name; which I scarcely know how to comprehend in the terms of any description.”

To relieve this intolerable situation, resolutions have been passed by several important bodies petitioning for a return to sight examinations.¹ In presenting similar resolutions to the

¹ In the autumn of 1907 they were first presented to the Conference of Masters of Church Schools (Groton, St. Mark's, and St. Paul's) and to the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools; adopted by the Classical Association of New Hampshire, sympathized with by a resolution of the American Philological Association, December 28, 1907; and indorsed, March 24, 1908, by the Committee of the Conference of Masters of Church Schools.

Eastern Massachusetts Classical Association last February, I acted in good faith on behalf of the principle involved (for I am not personally a sufferer from lack of uniformity). We believed that the object was to secure a kind of examination which pre-eminently should *not* "in large measure, if not wholly, determine the way in which the work is carried on in the schools," but which, on the other hand, should tend to preserve individuality on the part of the school, and to increase the ability, on the part of the pupil, to read Latin—if not more in amount and variety, surely not less. The resolutions which I had the honor to present explicitly called for two things only: some agreement on uniform requirements, and the prescription of much smaller portions of literature—"testing the power to read the language by simple examinations at sight, and thus leaving to the schools the choice of the major part of the reading to be done by their students." The New England Classical Association, April 4, 1908, voted to invite the classical associations of the Middle States and Maryland, and of the Middle West and South, to join in their petition to the American Philological Association to formulate classical entrance requirements in accordance with the sympathetic resolution passed by it, December 28, 1907. Accordingly, on April 18, 1908, the Association of the Middle West and South favored "the general policy of seeking the establishment of uniformity of college-entrance requirements in the Classics expressed in identical terms;" but would not commit itself to details. All details, it very properly thought, should be left to a Commission, to be appointed by the American Philological Association, adequately representing all the various organizations of classical teachers. The Classical Association of the Middle States and Maryland, however, on April 25, 1908, took upon itself the specification of details by adopting, with but a single dissenting vote, a scheme of examination presented by Professor Charles Knapp, the distinguishing characteristic of which is the following:

In all sight-examinations, the meanings of Latin words in the passages set not contained in the select list of 2,000 Latin words, or of the English words in the passages set for translation into Latin not readily translatable by the Latin words in the select list of 2,000 Latin words, shall be given in footnotes on the examination paper.

The fortunes of a national movement for uniformity would thus seem to be involved in the selection of a list of 2,000 words, even before the general principle of uniformity has been officially approved by an authoritative body. I do not believe that any list at present available can bear such responsibility, or ought to. The movers of a truly liberal reform regret that it has been associated with any single book, however good—even so excellent a book as Professor Lodge's, *quem honoris causa nomino* on the authority of Professor Peck (*Educational Review*, April, 1908) and of Professor Knapp (*School Review*, October, 1908, and *Educational Review*, November, 1908), who identify the Middle States plan with the adoption of "a scheme of examinations which has as its corner stone (*sic*) the book by Professor Lodge, with its select list of 2,000 words." But "the head stone of the corner" may be a stone that the builders will refuse. Then, what becomes of our national structure of reform?

It is inconceivable that a Commission of the American Philological Association will attach to a national scheme for uniform examinations a fixed list of words, before the principle of selection of the most efficient vocabulary has been determined. The only two methods of selection yet seriously applied have produced lists of such different literary character, that a consideration of the principle of selection seems forced by the logic of the situation.

Of the total vocabulary of *B. G.* i-v, *Cic. Cat.* i-iv, *Arch.* and *Pomp.*, and *Aen.* i-vi, 4,650 words, Professor Lodge prints in display type 2,000 as most important. For brevity, let us call this the "prescribed" list. Professor Lodge's large flat page enables him to use some judgment of his own in his selection (and very properly, for of course a numerical test is not the only test of Latinity); and to group several related forms under one number. He has accordingly taken advantage of the large size and number of his pages to make his book a useful compendium of Latin usage,² of different meanings in different grammatical constructions,³ of the words commonly used with special words,⁴

² See *acies*, *adeo*, *aggredior*, etc.

³ See *adhibeo*, *consulo*, *exspecto*, *ludo*, etc.

⁴ See *aestus*, *officio*, *caecus*, *vulnus*, *vultus*, etc.

of special combinations,⁵ of contrasts,⁶ of *discernenda*,⁷ and of synonyms.⁸ His appendix, too, containing the complete vocabulary of 4,650 words arranged in the order of occurrence, may be of great service, if you happen to be reading those particular books in just that sequence; but it is of less service, if you don't; and of very doubtful service, if it *compels* either the sequence or the selection. The point I wish to make is that the use of a limited prescribed text as the basis of selection is likely to produce a vocabulary as inadequate to the responsibilities which the Middle States plan imposes upon it, as it is obviously insufficient to justify such summary statements of usage as this, under ₅ *vehemens*₅₁: "Caes. uses the adv. only, ₂₆ *vehementer*₁₂₇; Cic. only the adj. in various uses." The index-figures (which are mine) show that the usage in *all* of Caes. and Cic. tells a different story from the usage in the prescribed portions; and so it does in the selection of vocabulary, as an aid to Latin at sight.

The other method of selection is the strict application of an arbitrary number of times used to the *complete* works of Latin authors. For brevity, let us call the result the "open" list. The arrangement of this list in narrow parallel columns, one to a page, compels the numbering of every short line; consequently, every word, phrase, idiom, compound, or variant, recorded as occurring over 15 times in *all* of Cicero's orations, and over 5 times in *all* of Caesar, Sallust, Nepos, and *Aeneid* i-vi, is reckoned in the enumeration. The application of personal judgment⁹ is left to the individual user,—all the words being provided with index-figures which show the number of times each word is used,—at

⁵ See *emo*, *fors*, *iam*, *nox*, *tum*.

⁶ See *laevus*, *niger*, *recens*, etc.

⁷ See *gladius* and *ensis*; *domesticus*, *alienus*; *ignoro*, *ignosco*; *mens*, *animus*; *pecor-*, *pecud-*; *reddo*, *redeo*; *uro*, *ardeo*, etc.

⁸ See *amnis*, *interficio*, *mare*, *posco*, *protinus*, etc.

⁹ One may mistrust his judgment of the literary value of words from recollection, when he is reminded, for example, that the familiar idiom *in matrimonium dare* occurs only on the occasion of the marriage of Orgetorix' daughter; one may not be surprised that Caesar never uses *amo* and *amor*; but isn't it a surprise to learn that he doesn't use *canis*, *dea*, or *dens*, and uses *in fugam dare* but three times! Such familiar friends as ₂ *rus*₆, ₀ *rosa*₀, and ₁₁ *incola*₂ do not appear in *H. S. L.* prose; or *mensa* and *stella*, until we come to Vergil! The index figures do tell us where to put the emphasis.

the left by Caesar; at the right by Cicero. The "prescribed 2,000, thus, contains more, the "open" list fewer than the numbering shows.¹⁰ The 2,000 capital-words really include nearly 2,400 entries; the 3,240 entries of the open list may be grouped under 1,134 capital words. A comparison of the results of the application of these two methods, therefore, in the total number of resulting words is not conclusive. Let us briefly consider the comparative quality of the resulting words (indicated by the index-figures).

Of Professor Lodge's 2,000 capital words 101 are not in the open list (i. e., are not used 15 times in Cic. or 5 times in Caes., Sal., Nep., or *Aen.* i-vi); 19 occur in another form (practically the only form ever used); the remaining 82 are here given in the order of times used in all of Caesar (left) and in all of Cicero's orations (right). The figure on the line denotes the times used in *Aen.* i-vi:

14 t., ₀inlustro₁₄ 0 (7 t. in *High School Latin*), ₀lego₁₄ 0 (2 t. in *H. S. L.*), ₄militia₁₄ 0 (not before *B. G.* vi; only 2 t. in *Pomp.*), ₁mitis₁₄ 0 (2 t. in *H. S. L.*, *Cat.* iv).—13 t., ₁fortunatus₁₃ 2, ₀narro₁₃ 2, ₃porticus₁₃ 1.—12 t., ₀lenio₁₂ 4, ₂purus₁₂ 4, ₁usquam₁₂ 4.—10 t., ₀coetus₁₀ 4, ₂fraternus₁₀ 3, ₄excido₁₀ 4, ₀rideo₁₀ 4, ₃tempero₁₀ 3.—9 t., ₂acervus₉ 2, ₁maternus₉ 4, ₄simplex₉ 1.—8 t., ₄cibus₈ 0 (only 2 t. in *H. S. L.*), ₁latebrae₈ 4, ₀opimus₈ 4, ₃septingenti₈ 0, ₃ubique₈ 4 (only 2 t. in *H. S. L.*).—7 t., ₃accomodo₇ 1, ₁bibo₇ 2, ₁serpo₇ 1, [₀serpens₁ 4]—6 t., ₀avidus₆ 3, ₁cubile₆ 4, ₀mano₆ 2, ₃quaterni₆ 0, ₂rus₆ 2, ₀semen₆ 2.—5 t., ₂alternus₅ 4, ₄devenio₅ 4, ₀fundo₅ 3, ₀ordior₅ 4, ₀profundus₅ 4.—4 t., ₀atrium₄ 4, ₄aridus₄ 2, ₄anceps₄ 4, ₃circa₄ 1 (only 1 t. in *H. S. L.*), ₂confundo₄ 4, ₄consurgo₄ 4, ₀dens₄ 4, ₁ferveo₄ 4, ₄fremitus₄ 4, ₁frigidus₄ 4, ₄lac₄ 3, ₂largus₄ 4, ₀lēvis₄ 4, ₀maritus₄ 4, ₀mel₄ 4, ₄nix₄ 1, ₁nonaginta₄ 0, ₂scindo₄ 4, ₀septendecim₄ 0, ₀serus₄ 4, ₁torreo₄ 4, ₁transmitto₄ 4, ₀uro₄ 4, ₀vescor₄ 4, ₂velox₄ 4, ₂[vicis]₄ 4.—3 t., ₀bacchor₃ 3, ₂caro₃ 0, ₃gravo₃ 3, ₀nico₃ 3, ₃nongenti₃ 0, ₀quingues₃ 0, ₀securus₃ 3, ₀sperno₃ 2, ₃undecim₃ 0.—2 t., ₀edo₂ 2, ₁ortus₂ 2, ₀subter₂ 0, ₀taedet₂ 2.—1 t., ₁calidus₁ 1, ₀potis₁ 1, ₀sero₁ 1.—0 t., ₀ceterus₀ 0, ₀gracilis₀ 0.

I do not imply that none of these words ought to be in such a list as we are considering; but whether these words are added "to make up 2,000 in round numbers, for grammatical reasons," or "because study of other authors shows them to be important,"

¹⁰ E. g., No. 798, *hīc*, this, *hīc*, there, *hāc*, *hōc*, *hīnc*, *hūc*, one number in the prescribed list, six in the open; similarly *illē*, four; *dum*, five; *sī*, eleven; *tum*, six; *superus*, six; *fors*, seven; *res*, seven, etc.

or "because they are identical in form with words included" (homonyms), it must be seen from what follows that their places might be taken by words of more value for reading at sight.

There are about 400 other words in black type not numbered in this 2,000, of which 134 occur *under 5 times* and are, therefore, not reckoned in the open list; but 243 are reckoned, because 53 occur *over 100 times*; 40, *50-100 times*; 54, *25-50 times*; 12, *20-25 times*; 31, *15-20 times*; and 53, *5-15 times*. Since this is a matter of numbering, I give only the words used over 100 times numbered in the open list, which are included, but not numbered, in Professor Lodge's "2,000 words:"

³*abs te*₁₂₆ ⁵⁰*bene*, *causā*, *celeriter*₁₉ *certus*, ¹³*consultum*, ⁵⁰*facile*, ⁷*falsus*, ³*fortasse*, ¹³*forte*₁₃₃, ²⁵*hic*, *legatus*, ²⁵*liberī*, *longe*₅₀, ¹⁰⁰*magis*₄₀₀, ⁵⁰*maxime*, ⁸⁸*minus*₂₈₀, ²⁵*modo*, ²⁵*ne* . . . *quidem*₃₀₀, ⁷*patria*, *plus*, ¹¹*posteaquam*₁₁₀, ²⁹*praesens*, ²⁵*privatus*, *proximus*₅₅, ¹⁰*publice*, ¹⁰⁰*quis*₆₀₀ (indef.), ⁵⁰*respublica*, ⁵*sanctus*, ²⁰*sicut*, ⁶*sin*, ⁵⁰*sive*₁₁₈, ²⁵*solum*₃₀₀ ¹⁰⁰*summus*₇₀₀, ^{superior}₅₀, ⁶*utrum*, ²⁵*vehementer*, *vero*, ¹⁰⁰*videor*₁₀₀₀; reckoned, but not separately numbered, in the open list: *animum advertere*, ⁴⁰*armatus*, ¹*conscripti*₂₁₅, ²¹*cum* . . . *tum*₂₀₁, ⁹*domī*₁₂₀, *non iam*, *neque* . . . *neque*₄₅₇, *non modo* . . . *sed etiam*₂₂₄, *quid?*₂₀₀, ¹²*rem*₁₆₀ *gerere*, ¹⁸*non solum* . . . *sed etiam*₁₉₄, *tribunus plebis*₁₉₉—a somewhat unnecessary iteration, perhaps, but to be borne in mind in the apparently big total of 3,240 separate entries in the open list.

More significant are 727 words of *High School Latin* in the open list not included in the prescribed 2,000, although 31 are used *over 100 times*; 53, *50-100 times*; 210, *25-50 times*; 68, *20-25 times*; 118, *15-20 times*; and 247, *5-15 times*. From this list, surely, serviceable substitutes may be selected for the last hundred that gave Professor Lodge so much trouble to select:

100 times: ⁶*edictum*, ¹*censor*, ⁷*comitium*, ²*condemno*, ¹*conlega*, ²⁵*contio*, ⁶*decretum*, ⁸*defensio*, ¹²*eius modi*₂₂₃, ⁵*existimatio*, ⁹*flagitium*, ⁹*fundus*, ⁹*idcirco*, ¹⁵*immortalis*, ²⁵*innocens*, ²*innocens*, ¹*maior* (adj.) ¹⁶*maiores*, ¹*O*, ⁵*parens*, ²*patronus*, ¹*pontifex*, ⁶*possideo*, ¹*praeclarus*, ⁵*quaestio*, ²*recito*, ⁰*reus*, ⁰*sapientia*, ¹³*senator*, ⁹*societas*, ¹*statua*. The literary value of the words excluded from the prescribed 2,000 may be inferred from portions only of the other groups selected in alphabetical order:

50-100 times: ³*aliquantus* (is reckoned but all the usages are *aliquanto*), ¹*argumentum*, *armatura*, ⁹*colonia*, ³*consecro*, ⁸*constantia*, ²*declaro* ¹⁸*defensor*, ³*designo*, ¹¹*decumanus*, ³*disputo*, ⁴*exprimo*, ²*familiaritas*, *fanum*, ⁷*fidelis*,

³*fraus*, ³*hereditas*, ²*heres*, ¹⁴*ignominia*, ¹*impius*, ⁰*improbitas*, ¹*impudentia*, ⁰*impurus*, ³*indignus*, ⁴*industria*, ⁸*infinitus*, ¹*inflammo*, etc.

25-50 times: ¹⁵*abduco*, ³*acerbiter*, ¹*adfinis*, ⁵*adiutor*, ¹²*admitto*, etc.

20-25 times: ¹*adiumentum*₂₂, ¹*adprobo*₂₀, ⁵*adsiduus*₂₀, ⁰*aro*₂₀, etc.

15-20 times: ¹*abutor*₁₅, ¹⁵*adicio*₄, ⁴*adripio*₁₉, ³*adrogantia*₁₈, etc.

5-15 times: ³*abstineo*₁₄, ⁵*abstraho*₇, ⁷*accedit quod*₅, ⁷*accedit ut*₄, etc.

Quite as significant are 349 words in the open list not printed in the prescribed 4,650 at all, for 27 are used *over 100 times*; 23, *50-100 times*; 88, *25-50 times*; 44, *20-25 times*; 68, *15-20 times*; and 99, *5-15 times*. To be sure 197 of them do not happen to occur in the prescribed text, and are italicized for omission; but their value for reading at sight may be inferred from the times they are used, selection in alphabetical order:

100 times: ⁰*accusatio*, ⁰*accusator*₂₀₀, ¹*actio*, ⁰*arator*₃₀₀, ¹*sestertius*, etc.

50-100 times: ¹*absolvo*, ¹*lucrum*₅₄, ¹*numquis*₅₄, ⁰*tribunatus*, ⁰*tribus*, etc.

25-50 times: ⁰*actor*, ⁰*actum*, ⁰*adopto*₂₈, ⁰*aedilis*, ¹*aedilitas*, ⁰*atqui*₃₁, etc.

20-25 times: ⁶*advocatus*₂₀, ¹*ambitio*₂₁, ⁰*anulus*₂₁, ⁰*candidatus*₂₃, etc.

15-20 times: ²*adfirmo*₁₆, ²*adsigno*₁₆, ⁰*adversor*₁₆, ⁰*balneum*₁₆, etc.

5-15 times: ⁰*aerumnae*₅, Sallust, ⁵*antesignanus*₂, ¹³*aquor*₀, etc.

The quality of the remaining 152 words which occur in *H. S. L.* and are numbered in the open list, but are not printed in Professor Lodge's book at all, may be inferred from the following (the arabic numerals denote books of the *Gallic War*; roman numerals, the four *Cat. orations*; *P. Pomp.*; *A. Archias*):

100 times: ⁷*aequitas*, i. 40; ii. 25; ¹³*certe*, 4. 25; *Pomp.* 2; ⁰*decuma*, *P.* 15; ²¹*factum*, 3. 14; iii. 27; ¹⁴*quare*, I. 13; i. 12; *quid?*₅₈₂, I. 47; i. 16 (but cf. Lodge's No. 429); ⁴⁶*quō*, 2. 16; iii. 28; ⁶⁵*quō* (ut eo), I. 8; iii. 22; ⁶³*siquis*₃₈₂, I. 18; i. 29; ⁰*verum*₃₀₀, i. 4; etc.

50-100 times: ²*aperte*, ii. 6; ¹⁰*malum*, iv. 6; *nonnullus*₂₅, I. 17; ii. 20; ¹¹*nonnunquam*, I. 15; iii. 13; ³*quam ob rem*₈₆, ii. 21; ⁰*scriba*₅₁, iv. 15; ⁵*unā*, 2. 17; 5. 36; iv. 3; etc.

25-50 times: ⁰*age*₂₇, *P.* 46; ⁷*dictum*, 5. 6; i. 39, 40; ⁵*gratiam referre*, I. 35; ³⁰*incommodum*, 5. 52, 53; *mandatum*, I. 37; ³*optimus quisque*₃₁, *P.* 1; *A.* 26; ¹¹*potens*, I. 18; *P.* 4, 60; ⁴*recte*, iii. 7; ⁰*tantummodo*₂₈, *A.* 11, 25; ²⁵*unā cum*₃₉, I. 5; i. 8; etc.

20-25 times: ⁸*excellens*₂₃, *A.* 15; ²*leviter*₂₄, iii. 18; ¹*necne*₂₂, ii. 13; ¹*obscure*₂₁, i. 8; ⁴*occulte*₂₃, iii. 5; ⁰*pacatus*₂₃, I. 6; iii. 22; *P.* 39; ³*penates*₂₃, *Aen.* i. 68; ²¹*quindecim*₁₁, I. 15; ³*sero*₂₀, 5. 29; i. 5; etc.

15-20 times: ⁶*acerbe*₁₈, iv. 10; ¹*certo* (scio)₁₅, *A.* 32; ¹⁵*imperatum*₀, 2. 3; 5. 20; ⁰*lectus*₁₈, iv. 13; ⁰*orbis terrae*₁₆, i. 13; ⁸*postulatum*₁₅, I. 40; ⁷*praeceptum*₁₈, *A.* 14, 18; *P.* 28; ⁷*praecipue*₁₉, iii. 28; etc.

5-15 times: *agricultura*₀, 3. 17, 4. 1 *bis*; *anguste*₁, 5. 23, 24; *directus*₀, 4. 17; *insolenter*₄, 1. 14; ii. 20; etc.

Of course, some of these omitted forms may be inferred from parent words included in the 2,000. But it is a poor rule that won't work both ways: has not ability to infer, to derive, to compound words, always been accepted as one of the prime products of language training; and shall the development of this ability now be officially discouraged by "giving in footnotes the meanings of Latin words in the sight passages set for admission to college not contained in the select list of 2,000 words"? I have the utmost sympathy with any move to secure translation "with substantial accuracy and into good English," even to making "no allowance for ignorance of the meaning of words or for slovenly English;" but, somehow, the use of a rigid prescribed list, as recommended in the Middle States plan, does not seem to me to be in the spirit of freedom

Even as the requirements now stand, and as examinations are now conducted, my experience leads me to believe that 1,900 of this prescribed 2,000 (2,400) will cover 85 to 90 per cent. of the vocabulary work now required of candidates for college. But to increase its efficiency 8 or 9 per cent. it will probably require an increase of one-third in number, to, say, 2,500 words. The user of the open list may reduce it nearly one-fourth in number without impairing its efficiency more than 3 or 4 per cent., for examination purposes (and the index-figures leave him free to do so). But it may properly be urged, isn't the main object of studying Latin to learn how to read it; and is vocabulary efficiency, anyway, reducible to figures and percentages? What proportion to the effort required to turn out a first-class football team does the effort bear which is necessary to secure the infinitesimal excess of efficiency that turns out a winner? Economy isn't applied to football—why should it be to the, I hardly dare say more intellectual, but somewhat less muscular, exercise of Latin? Simply because the attitude of the public, scholastic as well as athletic, is vastly different in its effect on the student mind: the opposition to his game stiffens the student's loyalty to it, because of course its opponents don't know the real thing; the educational

opposition to Latin, on the other hand, confirms his prejudice against it, because of course its opponents, having all tried it, must know what they are talking about! Under these conditions, therefore, the educational value of Latin, taken under protest, frequently "bears no reasonable proportion to the time spent on it."

The sooner classical teachers accept the situation in the shift of emphasis in the culture that counts today, the sooner they will find that the letting-up on some of the things that are *just now* not so important, and the introduction of some economies in arrangement, selection, and method of presentation, will not only prove to be "good business" and bring prompter returns, but also, perhaps, turn the tide that seems to be running against Latin, too, in competition with modern subjects under free election. I am not debating the merits of Latin and Greek. "It is a condition not a theory that confronts us." I am told that there is not a high school in Minnesota teaching Greek. Too strenuous conservatism *may* (I don't say it *will*) involve Latin in a similar fate. I cannot forbear expressing my suspicion that the most dangerous friends of the humanities today are those complacent teachers of the classics who will not abate one jot of their conservatism because, forsooth, it will be a surrender of humanism to Tubal Cain! "If we forbear to tax," said the Tories to Burke, "don't we forfeit our right to tax?" and yielding nothing, they lost all. Let us take warning before a crisis comes. One thing is sure—it is easier to keep a subject in the course than to put it back. There is no short cut to the essentials that can obviate the necessity of good hard work; but if such complementary studies in vocabulary as the two we have been considering (inadequate as they may be, and obviously are, as college requirements) can in any way "deceive the burthen of life" of the poor student who elects Latin, and really wants to learn to read it with rapidity and enjoyment, there ought to be a place for them somewhere. That place, however, I feel sure the Commission to be appointed by the Philological Association will decide is not as a rider on a national movement for uniform requirements and for perfect freedom of choice.